



MONY girls designed colorful signs to spur co-workers on to greater efforts



Tying in with New York City's clean-up campaign, MONY girls line up to empty wastebaskets into gigantic container mounted on truck to help publicize activity

How much is "clutter-itis" interfering with the smooth flow of your work? File drawers filled with "dead-wood" can short-circuit the most "live-wire" group

"Sparkling Rec Mgt at the Grass Roots Level"

Good Housekeeping Is Good Business

GOOD housekeeping is as important in business as it is in the home.

In business it helps efficiency, induces good working habits, saves space and money, speeds up service, frequently eliminates accident hazards, and improves the appearance of a place.

But even in topnotch companies, where good housekeeping is practiced every working day, there is an inevitable human failing that tends to let "clutter-itis" set in gradually over a period of time.

The "disease" takes various forms... here a file drawer overburdened with material that's no longer needed... there a desk top sprawling with a volume of disarrayed papers the employee can't possibly handle... here a supply room with obsolete forms taking up valuable and needed space... there a closet shelf with dusty boxes unopened for years, containing material that's been unwanted for years... here a work area with desks that have inched out of their once-neat rows... there a desk drawer bulging with personal bric-a-brac ranging from bobby pins and old lipsticks to theater ticket stubs and matchbooks.

How does a company that practices good housekeeping day in and day out suggest to its employees the need for a general "clean-up campaign"? At best, it's a chore few employees really like to do. How does a big company engender enthusiasm for the chore? How are hundreds of employees gracefully encouraged to get into "the spirit" of a clean-up drive?

Mutual of New York found the answers to these questions and successfully conducted just such a program. The 1,600 employees at MONY's home office who found wholesome fun amid the spirited competition, take a real pride in their achievements. What are the keys to the success of MONY's good housekeeping project?

1. Don't do it too often. Once every two years should be frequent enough.
2. Make the campaign as unofficial, and unofficial, as possible.
3. Have the employees themselves, or their association, sponsor the idea.
4. Invite management to support the program and to set the example.
5. Provide incentives other than

the cold, impersonal reasons of efficiency and appearance. Set up competition among departments and present modest awards to those sections that do the best job in the clean-up drive. Select the judges from among the employee group.

6. "Humanize" the program. Cartoons, posters, lighthearted bulletins, satirical skits broadcast over the company public-address system; these and other devices get the idea across in language that everyone understands.

7. Promote the program publicly. If possible, tie in with a community clean-up program, such as New York City's recent undertaking. Enlist the company's employees as individual good citizens representing a corporate good citizen—the company. This kind of government-business co-operation lends prestige to the efforts of both groups.

8. Promote the program from within, through full picture-story coverage in the company magazine.

9. At the conclusion of the campaign, publicly thank all employees for co-operating; and personally thank members of all committees who worked on the program.

At Mutual of New York, three clean-up drives have been conducted in the seven years since the company moved into its new 15-story building at Broadway and 55th St.

Preparations for the program begin about one month before the starting date. Representatives of the company's employees associa-

now they can get together with their staffs; lists the various areas, such as desks, files, coat racks, offices, and so forth, that might need attention.

Here, too, there's the light touch. The letter leads off with a poem:

"Fall has come," the poet said, "and cleaning chores it brings;

system. One character is a hard-to-impress skeptic who concedes reluctantly that "I'd like to get into . . . but they won't let me!"

At another time, he makes a jibe at the company cafeteria: "Hmmpf. They say that that's what's wrong with the cheese sandwiches—been left in the temporary file too long!"

On the second day of Mutual of New York's clean-up drive, New York City entered the picture at MONY's invitation. The city's Citizens Committee for a Cleaner New York stationed a 12-foot-high litter basket at the Broadway entrance to the building. MONY employees who were able to break away from their desks for a few moments formed a bucket brigade leading to the litter basket—and therein emptied their pockets of such minute debris as gum wrappers, scrap papers, empty cigarette packs.

Placards told what the demonstration was about. Purpose was to suggest to onlookers, and to people who saw the pictures and read the story in the newspapers, that office workers empty their pockets before they leave their desks, so they won't be tempted to throw "pocket litter" on the sidewalks or in the streets.

Inside the building, MONY's drive closed at noon on a Wednesday. Immediately the panel of judges went to work, surveying every nook and cranny on each of the 13 floors the company occupies in its building. By 3:30 p.m., the judges had made their decisions. The winning floor and the winning unit were announced over the public-address system. So, too, were the winners of the door prizes.

By Friday morning, the plaques had been inscribed with the names of the winners, and arrangements had been made with Schrafft's (which provides desk-side coffee service daily to MONY employees) to have coffee and cake available for all employees in the winning areas. At 10 o'clock Friday morning, MONY President Louis W. Dawson personally visited the winning areas and presented the plaques. The awards promptly were mounted on the wall, in a prominent spot visible to all passers-by. If an area wins the plaque three successive times, it will earn permanent ownership of the award.

Pictures of the presentation and the award winners appeared in the company magazine and were sent to various leading trade journals covering insurance news.



Award for best-looking unit went to Central Service office. Manager Edward W. Wider (second from right) accepts plaque from MONY president, L. W. Dawson

tion, planning division, and personnel and public relations divisions get together. They fix the dates for the drive (usually a day and a half), list the things to be done, draw up a timetable, and assign responsibilities for the various chores.

About one week before the drive begins, the president of MONY sends a personal letter to all officers of the company. "We've reached that time again . . . time for a Clean-Up Drive," he tells them. His letter announces the dates for the program, reminds them of things they themselves can do to prevent their own files from becoming cluttered, and concludes:

"I look forward to this biennial activity, because it shows how much co-operation, enthusiasm, and good spirit can be engendered by humanizing an ordinarily laborious chore. I know you'll offer your wholehearted support and encouragement to the spirit and intent of the program."

Shortly thereafter the MONY Employees Association, through the Clean-Up Committee, sends a letter to all supervisors in the company. The letter suggests—not directs—

"Our desks—and shelves—and filing space—

Reserve for important things.

"My, how the papers do pile up—
If you're the type that clings."

The letter concludes:

"The efforts of you and your staff will make this campaign a success—and MONY a neater, pleasanter place to work. Many thanks for what we know will be your wholehearted co-operation."

A special bulletin from the Employees Association and the company's regular "Weekly News Letter" to employees keep everyone posted on other details about the campaign. The names of the judges are made public. Rules of the competition are listed. Prizes are announced—a plaque and free coffee and cake for the best-looking floor; similar awards for the neatest unit; and a drawing for two door prizes donated by neighboring business firms.

In advance of the campaign and during the day and a half it takes place, posters are displayed throughout the building, and a series of satirical sketches is broadcast over MONY's public address